



June 24, 2005

**Briefing to the Seattle City Council
Committee of the Whole Workshop on Alaskan Way Seawall and Viaduct**

**PIER 62/63 PILING REPLACEMENT
And
CENTRAL WATERFRONT PARK PLANNING PROCESS**

The Seattle City Council will be briefed on the progress of the Pier 62/63 Piling Replacement and Waterfront Park Planning Study at the June 27, 2005 workshop on the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall project. The City Council's Parks, Neighborhoods and Education Committee was previously briefed on the scope of work for study on April 20, 2005.

Project Description and Background

In 2004 Mayor Greg Nickels proposed undertaking a Pier 62/63 Piling Replacement project, beginning in 2005, in the 2005-2010 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The entire piling system supporting the piers, which has been the home of the *Summer Nights on the Pier* concert series since 1991 and other major public events, has deteriorated and public use has been restricted. Subsequently, the City Council approved \$500,000 in funding from the Cumulative Reserve Subfund in the 2005 Budget for planning and preliminary design of the Pier 62/63 project. The 2005-2010 CIP anticipates funding the pier replacement phase, expected to cost \$12-14 million, with Councilmanic debt issued in 2006. In addition, the Council adopted a Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) requesting "that the Department present alternative design concepts for a renovated Pier 62/63 open space prior to proceeding with the project."

The Mayor has directed Seattle Parks and Recreation to work with the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) in order to coordinate planning for the pier replacement with Central Waterfront planning work already under way. This expanded planning process, to be funded with the appropriated Pier 62/63 project budget, now includes the public park spaces between Pier 57 and the Port's Bell Harbor marina at Pier 64, and the potential upland open space that will be created atop the SR-99 Alaskan Way Tunnel from the vicinity of the Seattle Aquarium to the Pike Place Market.

Seattle Parks and Recreation has retained the architectural and urban design firm of MAKERS, supported by various other consultants, to undertake this study. To date, Parks staff and the design team have assembled background information, participated in three workshops held by the Seattle Design Commission on the Department of Planning and Development's Waterfront Concept Plan, briefed the Board of Parks Commissioners at three meetings as the study has progressed, and begun to define a series of alternative plan concepts. Included are short term and long term revisions to Waterfront Park, alternatives for redevelopment of Piers 62/63 (including a no-build scheme), and alternative strategies for a new open space that will link the waterfront and the Pike Place Market. Possibilities for marine habitat enhancement have been considered as well.

Public Involvement

The planning process is largely built upon the Department of Planning and Development's work over the past two years, including an intense charrette process in early 2004 that involved over thirty teams of interested citizens and a number of members of the Seattle design community. As noted above, the planning process is dovetailed with the Department of Planning and Development's Waterfront Concept Plan effort, which has involved three workshops with the Seattle Design Commission, and a separate Waterfront Partners advisory group that met for the first time on June 10. A subcommittee of the Partners reviewed background information and options under consideration at a meeting on June 17 and reviewed the preliminary plan concepts on June 24. Along with the Department of Planning and Development, Seattle Parks and Recreation has participated in the Seattle Department of Transportation and Washington Department of Transportation's three open houses on the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall project on the evenings of June 21, 22, and 23.

Issues

Action must be taken on *Piers 62-63* in the next few years due to deterioration of the support piling. As noted above, the Summer Nights on the Pier concert series already has been relocated to South Lake Union Park since the pier structure can no longer support the loading of the equipment, seating and numbers of people associated with such an activity. The piers are only open to casual use with a few picnic tables at this time, with no special events scheduled that would involve crowds on the piers. The continued deterioration of the piling likely will lead to closure of the piers to even this limited use within a few years. If left to decay, the piers would be a blight along the waterfront in the future.

The long term disposition of the site of the piers involves issues relative to special uses (i.e., concerts), casual recreational use, and habitat protection and enhancement. Options under consideration for replacement of the piers involve standing any new structure off shore of the seawall so as to enhance the nearshore marine corridor along the seawall. Replacement could involve simply re-creating the large pier platform that could support temporary structures as occurs at present, or could involve provision of permanent facilities. The possibility of not rebuilding Piers 62/63 is also under consideration, and would allow for maximization of habitat enhancement at the site.

In the long run, the approved plan for the expansion of the Seattle Aquarium (Resolution 30717) involves removal of the **Waterfront Park** to allow for the new over water structure that will be added outside of Pier 59 and a shift of public park uses to the Piers 62/63 site. Removal of Waterfront Park offers the possibility of improving marine habitat at this location. In the short term, until Waterfront Park is removed, there are issues relative to visibility, safety and recreational uses at this site that need to be addressed.

Ideas for a new **park atop the SR-99 lid** to the vicinity of the Pike Place Market at Victor Steinbrueck Park involve possible changes to that existing park and focus attention on redevelopment of the Market's PC-1 site that has been vacant for a number of years. This site is the primary location where appropriate adjacent development could provide for activation of the new park space. The nature of the park space is at issue as well-it could be a verdant greensward or could be a lively extension of the market. Activation of the space will be important for its success. The topographic changes from the Alaskan Way elevation at the waterfront to the Market some 80 to 100 feet higher pose three dimensional design challenges relative to access, connectivity, and linkage of these important spaces.

Attached to this briefing paper are two figures that portray site analyses of these spaces and the options for the future.

Planning Concepts

The consultant team has assembled the options noted above into three alternative plan concepts to portray possible futures for the study area. These are also attached to this briefing paper.

- The first alternative, the **Belvedere**, provides an extension of Steinbrueck Park to the SR 99 lid, a new development at the PC-1 site with an extension of the Desimone Bridge to the lid, new retail development on the easterly edge of the lid and terraces to Alaskan Way-all with views to the west. A new Pier 62/63 would feature a fixed concert/special event venue with retail and concession space below the seating. Waterfront Park would be removed and intertidal habitat work would focus on improving existing rip rap to create a sloping face to the Alaskan Way seawall.
- A second alternative, the **Market Street**, also extends Steinbrueck Park to the SR 99 lid, develops the PC 1 site with an extension of the Desimone Bridge to the new park atop the lid, and provides market stalls (seasonal truck vendors) along the easterly edge of the lid and other retail spaces at the triangle site to create a double loaded, terraced open space. A redeveloped Pier 62/63 would be a flat, multi-use space situated closer to the Aquarium than exists at present. Waterfront Park would be removed and intertidal habitat work would include nearshore beach enhancement at the Waterfront Park site as well as north of the new, relocated Pier 62/63.
- A third alternative, the **Eau Naturelle**, relocates the concert/special event venue to a westerly extension of Steinbrueck Park, while the rest of the SR-99 lid is largely devoted to a green open space. As in the other alternatives, the PC-1 site would be redeveloped with an extension of the Desimone Bridge. A small building at the triangle site could also support retail to activate the new park atop the lid. In this scheme, Piers 62/63 would be removed in

favor of a more extensive intertidal habitat that would involve nearshore beach with a backshore above the tidal range. Waterfront Park would also be removed in favor of habitat improvements. The overwater structure of Pier 62/63 would be replaced by a narrow offshore waterfront walkway that could trace the outline of the northerly and westerly edges of the former Piers 62/63 and extend to the Aquarium on Pier 59.

Budget

As noted above, \$500,000 has been appropriated for planning and design work on Pier 62/63. Approximately \$200,000 is devoted to the current planning study, and the balance reserved for the schematic phase design for Pier 62/63 replacement once the plan is completed. Other funding, such as the Councilmanic bonds noted above, could provide for the final design and construction of the Pier 62/63 project. This and the other work, such as short term improvements to Waterfront Park, nearshore habitat enhancement, and the future park development atop SR 99, are unfunded. Certain of this work, however, ultimately may be accomplished as part of the Alaskan Way Viaduct and Seawall project.

Schedule

The current study will be completed this summer. Our next review is scheduled for the next Waterfront Partners meeting on July 8, and the park sub-committee will be asked to meet one more time as well. A presentation to the Board of Parks Commissioners will occur on July 14 after the alternatives are refined. Following this review, the consultant team will complete the study report in late July, along with presentation materials. Seattle Parks and Recreation will then review the report and make recommendations relative to Pier 62-63. The Executive will report to the City Council in September per the Statement of Legislative Intent that asks for alternative concepts for Piers 62/63. The other recommendations from the study will be incorporated into the Department of Planning and Design's Waterfront Concept plan that will be presented to the City Council this fall.

If a proposal for Piers 62/63 is selected, design work would proceed this fall into schematic phase. If additional funding is approved, design would proceed into design development and permit application in early 2006 and construction documents later that year. Assuming permits are issued on a timely basis and favorable bids are received, the project conceivably could be under construction in mid-2007 and completed by mid-2008 if an aggressive schedule is established and pursued. In-water construction work will be limited by the fish window that precludes work from February 15 to July 15 each year.